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ABSTRACT

This paper reviews research on supervision in counselor training. The author approaches supervision in counselor training as a continuum. At one end are those who see supervision primarily as a didactic activity and at the other extreme are those that stress the experiential, "counseling" approach to supervisory role. The two approaches demand very different behaviors from the supervisor--the first, lecturing explaining, etc.; the second, listening, understanding, reflecting. Approaches near the middle of the continuum utilize both didactic and experiential skills. There is little research on what comprises ideal supervisory behavior, not on what supervisors themselves view as ideal supervision. Several studies looked at what supervisors actually did, and their results are inconsistent. Research using behavioral analyses of supervisor activities is reported, and the general conclusion is that not enough is known as yet about supervisor behavior nor about the factors that make for successful supervision. (NG)

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# The Process of Supervision

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## Approaches to Supervision

Counselor educators have long debated what constitutes good practice in the supervision of counselors-in-training. Protagonists in this debate have alternately characterized the supervisory process as being fundamentally similar to teaching, (Krasner, 1962; Krumboltz, 1961), counseling, (Arbuckle, 1965; Kell and Mueller, 1966), or a combination of teaching and counseling (Patterson, 1964). In each model of supervision the outcome goal is focused around the modification of supervisee behavior. The methods employed and the process goals are, however, quite divergent across models.

The "teaching" or didactic approach to supervision as discussed in the literature involves "direct" behaviors on the part of the supervisor (as defined by the Flanders Interaction Analysis system) including lecturing, explaining, questioning, and other related "teaching" techniques to encourage the supervisee to change his behavior in the desired direction. In the supervision sessions the supervisor is viewed as being responsible for taking the lead in directing the conversation, in analyzing supervisee strengths and weaknesses, and in making suggestions for supervisee change.

At the other extreme of the teaching-counseling continuum is the "counseling" or experimental approach to supervision which

advocates focusing on the affective state and emotional reactions of the supervisee. Proponents of this approach emphasize the importance of a supervisee's attitudes, beliefs, feelings, and values which affect his or her behavior during counseling sessions. Experientally - oriented supervisors advocate the use of indirect supervisor behaviors such as listening, reflecting, and clarifying to help the supervisee explore the problems he or she is experiencing in counseling and supervision sessions. Psychoanalytic supervisors have long been concerned with helping to free neophyte counselors from their emotional conflicts so that they may better help emotionally conflicted clients. Client-centered therapists have stressed the importance that a supervisee be a fully-functioning person as a pre-requisite to being an effective counselor. Therefore, client-centered supervisors are concerned with developing a facilitative relationship with their supervisees in which they can explore their reactions to their counseling sessions.

The integrative approach to supervision employs a combination of supervisor behaviors to affect supervisee change, ranging from didactic instruction to empathic understanding. Process goals focus alternatively on the supervisee's attitudes and behavior. Techniques utilized by the supervisor may include initiation of activities like role-playing and focused feedback to encourage the supervisee to consider his or her affective as well as behavioral reactions to clients. Patterson, for instance, stresses the need for the supervisor to develop a facilitative relationship

with supervisees so that the supervision process may proceed, unimpeded by supervisee defensiveness, to a rational consideration of behavior. Ideally, the supervisor takes on the role of a consultant rather than a "director" of the session. In any case, supervision seems to involve four types of activities which include consultation, counseling, training and instruction, and evaluation (Delaney, 1975; Moses, 1974). The difference in approaches to supervision seem to be more in the relative emphasis given to a particular activity than to its inclusion or exclusion from the supervisory process. Well, what does research tell us about supervision?

While much has been written about the three orientations to supervision in an attempt to explain the theoretical approaches of each, few studies have been carried out in an attempt to determine 1) what supervisors view as ideal supervisory behavior; 2) what supervisors report that they actually do, behaviorally, in supervision; 3) what cogni[illegible]ve differences exist among supervisors, and whether these differences are manifested in their ideal, reported, and actual supervisory behavior; and 4) how behavioral analyses of supervision sessions may be carried out so that the supervisory process can be better understood and so that directives for supervision may be formulated.

## Ideal Supervisory Behavior

No studies could be found which attempted to determine what

practicing supervisors view as ideal supervisory behavior. A review of statements made by counselor educators regarding what should occur in supervision seems to indicate that theoretical approaches to supervision closely parallel a counselor educator's approact to counseling: those who stress the importance of the implementation of the facilitative conditions in counseling recommend a similar approach to supervision (Arbuckle, 1965; Patterson, 1964). Those who are more behaviorally oriented recommend a more didactic approach (Delaney, 1969).

## Supervisor Behavior

Only two studies were found which attempted to determine what supervisors actually do in supervision. Walz and Roeber (1962) mailed typescripts of counseling interviews along with background data about the client and counselor-in-training to twenty-nine counselor educators, who were asked to respond to the typescript as they would if it had been given to them by a member of their practicuum. Analyses of the comments on the typescripts revealed that 73% of their comments were classified as supportive. The focus of their comments was primarily on the counselor (median number per interview = 25) rather than on the client (median = 9) or on the interaction between the counselor and client. Furthermore, the supervisors in general were reported

to have one or two characteristic modes of response which they used throughout the "supervisory interview." The investigators concluded that the respondents appeared to be didactic in orientation.

In another study, Johnston and Gysbers (1966) surveyed current supervisory practices. They examined normative data on practicum supervisor's reactions to selected alternatives for handling some typical training situations. The situations were sent to 51 counselor-education programs in the North Central Region of ACES. In general, the responses seemed to indicate that supervisors viewed their role as one of "nonintervention"; the supervisory relationship was viewed as being more similar to counseling than to teaching. This finding seems to be inconsistent with the Walz Roeber study (1962).

## Cognitive Differences Among Supervisors

Hamachek (1971) administered the Problem Solving and Sensitivity Kit to 12 counseling supervisors from the faculty of a state university and to their 17 supervisees to determine whether cognitive differences existed among supervisors. On the basis of their scores supervisors were divided into high and low cognitive groups. The author concluded that there were significant differences between the supervisees trained by the high cognitive supervisors, with the former gaining more on measures of

respect and affective functioning.

Demos and Zuwaylif (1962) carried out an investigation to see whether counselor outcome characteristics after supervision were related to the theoretical positions of their supervisors. One client-centered, one eclectic , and one directive supervisor worked with forty secondary school counselors in practicuum. The Porter test, used to measure counselor movement, revealed that while the supervisees as a group became significantly less evaluative, supportive, and probing, and more understanding and interpretive, the supervisees of the client-centered supervisor were found to be signigicantly more understanding, and significantly less probing, than were the supervisees of the eclectic and directive supervisors. Thus, there is some indication that the theoretical bent of the supervisor does affect the outcome characteristics of his supervisees.

Birk (1972) investigated whether a counselor's preference for a particular method of supervision (didactic versus experimental) affected the outcome of supervision. Two groups of eight students each received their preferred method of supervision, and two groups of eight did not. It was found that the level of empathic understanding obtained by the supervisees was not contingent upon their receiving their supervision of choice. The method of supervision was, however, a significant factor: the supervisees who received the

didactic instructional supervision attained higher levels of empathy than did the experimental and control group (which received no supervision) ($p<.01$). Interaction effects were also found between supervisor's method of supervision. The two graduate students who served as supervisors administered both supervisory conditions. It was found that both supervisors did better using the didactic approach ($p<.05$).

## Behavioral Analyses of Supervision

Behavioral analyses of supervision have been carried out differently by a number of investigators. Lambert (1974) studied four supervisors to determine whether the facilitative conditions they offered was the same when they were supervising as when they were counseling. Audiotapes were made of eight supervisory sessions and eight counseling sessions. The investigators found no significant differences between the levels of genuineness and respect in counseling and supervision. There were differences ($p<.001$) on the levels of empathy, specificity, and on the therapeutic work category of the Hill Interaction Matrix. The counseling sessions were rated higher on each dimension. The authors concluded that the fact that supervisees do, in fact, learn to offer higher levels of facilitative conditions during their supervision (as demonstrated by other studies) may indicate that

the supervisory process may not be basically experimental in nature.

In an analogue study, Payne, Winter, and Bell (1972) employed three counselors (one university staff member and two graduate students) as supervisors for general psychology students during training in empathy techniques. Two groups of eighteen students each (the "counselors") listened to a tape in which empathy was explained and modeled by a counselor. One group received technique-oriented supervision, the other group received counseling-oriented supervision. Four control groups received no supervision. It was found that the group that received the technique oriented supervision reached the highest level of empathy after three trials at responding to tape-recorded client statements ($p < .01$). The two supervision sessions, however, lasted a total of 30 minutes, making any conclusions about the relative efficacy of technique-oriented and counseling-oriented supervision necessarily tentative. Also of interest is the fact that the control group which received modeling of empathy but no supervision scored almost as high on final empathy measures as did the technique-oriented group, and slightly higher than the counseling group.

Davidson and Emmer (1966) subjected 28 counselors-in-training to two supervisory conditions: supportive supervision and non-supportive supervision. They found that counselors receiving

the non-supportive supportive condition shifted their concern from their clients to themselves to a greater degree than did students receiving supportive supervision (p .05) as measured on a 22-item attitude scale designed to measure a counselor's focus of concern.

## Conclusions

In conclusion it may be said that while many general statements have been made by counselor educators as to the approaches which should be taken towards the supervisor of counselors-in-training,.little research has been carried out to examine specific components of the supervisory process so that an adequate framework for supervision may be established and so that guidelines for supervisory behavior may be formulated. As Delaney (1975) stated, "Without any formal way to even describe the supervisory process, training in supervision has taken on a 'master supervision' approach, that is, a watch-how-I-do-it system of modeling." (page 6). In 1971, Hansen suggested that "What is needed is an end to description and a move toward solid experimental investigation" (p .271). That need still exists today.

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